

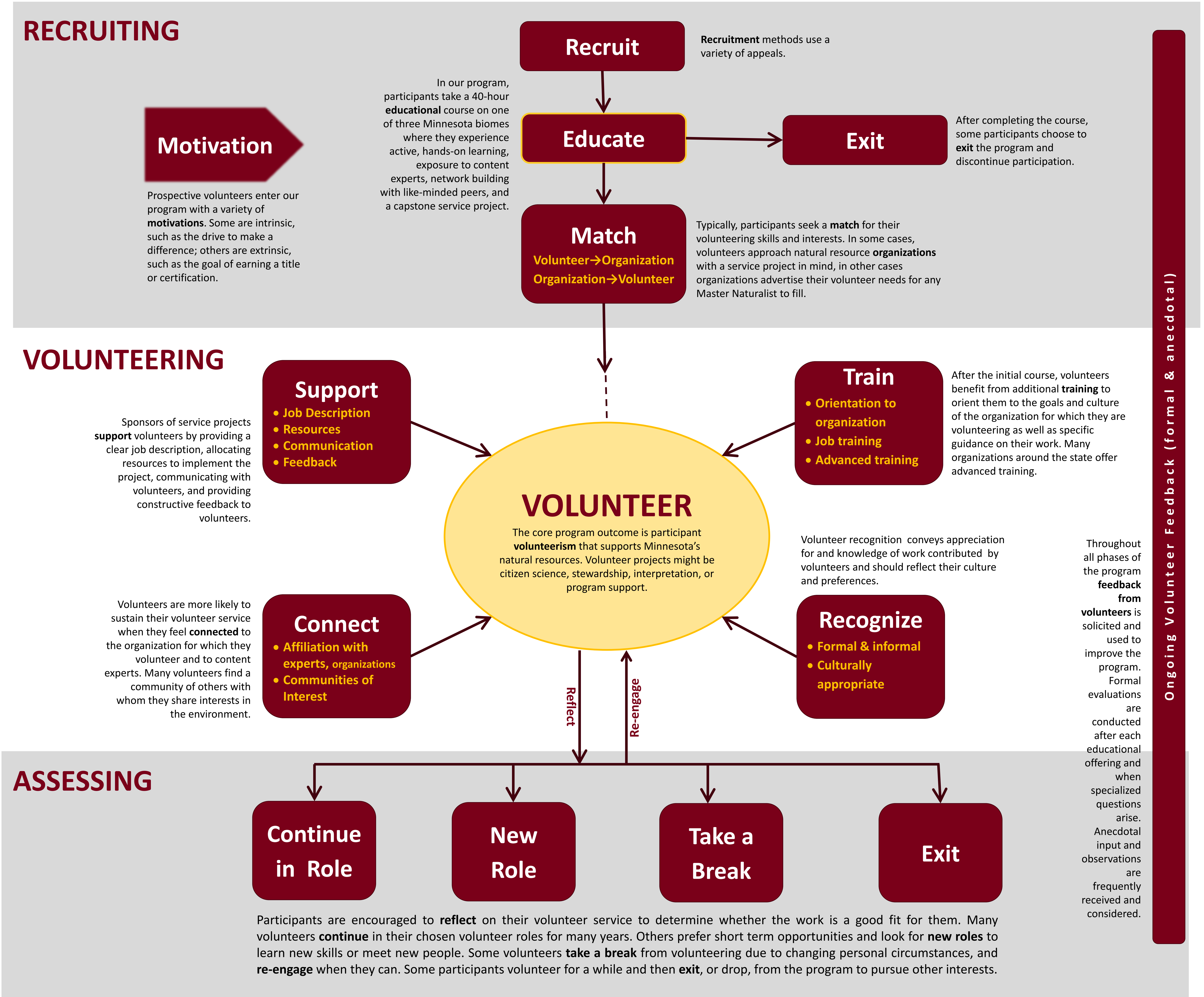
# Engaging natural resource volunteers: From education to action



## ABSTRACT

Volunteers are an increasingly important tool in the outreach work of Extension. Many natural resource education programs depend on volunteers to extend their reach. A number of “master volunteer” programs have developed in recent years to meet the growing need for training, coordinating, and serving these volunteers. Best practices for working with master volunteers is a growing area of concentration for many Extension educators. We describe new model of the volunteer life cycle, organized around three phases of volunteering: recruitment/training, service, and assessment. The emphasis is on keeping volunteers engaged through all phases of the volunteer life cycle.

## Minnesota Master Naturalist Volunteer Life Cycle



Ongoing Volunteer Feedback (formal & anecdotal)

## CONCLUSION

Development and management of the Minnesota Master Naturalist Volunteer Training Program requires much attention on the training of instructors and participants. This model helps put that education in the context of the larger program and emphasizes the program’s most important output: the volunteer experience. By encapsulating the full measure of the volunteer cycle, the model serves as a useful structure for improving the program by highlighting the many points in the cycle where we can support volunteers, and sustain their volunteer service and satisfaction with the program.



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## REFERENCES

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